



Short Safety Subject

Christmas Season Safety

Christmas is a time of celebration and tradition. The following suggestions will help you to keep your holiday festivities safe for the whole family.

Decorating the Christmas Tree

Place the tree as far as possible from heaters, stoves, fireplaces or other fire hazards.

Make sure the tree is securely anchored so it cannot be knocked over by children or pets.

Use only lights that are UL approved. Check them prior to use and repair or replace any damaged wiring, plugs, sockets or bulbs.

Do not place paper or cloth decorations near tree lights.

Turn Christmas lights on for only short periods of time and unplug them when going out or to bed.

Water natural trees daily to prevent them from drying out.

Place decorations that are breakable or have small parts out of the reach of small children and pets.

Always supervise children around the Christmas tree.

Decorating the House

Lit candles are a fire and burn hazard. They should be placed in a safe location out of reach of small children and should never be left unattended.

Keep holly, mistletoe and poinsettias out of the reach of small children or pets. These plants are poisonous.

If there are young children in the home, ensure that the garlands, wreaths and other decorations are out of reach, unless they are labelled as safe for infants and toddlers.

If you are decorating with balloons, be aware that broken balloons pose a serious choking hazard to little children.

Choosing Safe Gifts for Children

Select gifts that are suited to the child's age and abilities. Look for the manufacturer's age recommendations on the package.

If you are buying a gift for someone else's child, don't hesitate to ask the parents for suggestions.

Remember that very young children put things in their mouths. Check toys carefully for small parts that could be

pulled or broken off (such as the eyes on stuffed toys or the wheels on toy cars).

Check all toys for sharp points or edges.

Follow the manufacturer's directions closely for correct toy assembly and use. Teach the child how to use the toy properly.

Ensure that older children will have adequate adult supervision with toys that may pose a safety hazard if used incorrectly, such as chemistry sets or woodburning kits.

Keep in mind that the use of batteries in toys should be monitored for the following potential dangers:

- incorrectly installed batteries (with wrong ends in contact) may overheat and explode;
- old batteries may leak - the chemicals inside can cause burns;
- small "button" batteries can be swallowed and may cause poisoning.

Keep broken toys out of reach until they can be repaired. Discard toys that cannot be repaired.

Include necessary protective gear with a gift of sports equipment (such as a helmet with a bike or knee, wrist, elbow protectors and helmet with rollerblades).

Discard wrapping materials promptly. Plastic bags can lead to suffocation and small packing pellets can be a choking hazard for little children.

Entertaining During the Holidays

Holiday gatherings bring friends and family together. However, hosts and guests who are not accustomed to having little children around may need to be reminded to keep dangerous items out of reach:

- Nuts, candies and small snack foods can cause choking.
- Hot drinks are a frequent cause of scalding burns.
- Cigarettes are poisonous if eaten, and lit cigarettes are a burn and fire hazard.
- Alcohol can cause poisoning and brain damage in young children.

Purses are enticing to young children, but may contain such dangerous items as medications, lighters, or sharp objects. Leftover food, drinks and ashtrays should be cleaned up promptly after entertaining, so they are not accessible to little early-risers!

And of course... drinking and driving do not mix!

Have a safe and fun Christmas!